

Non Technical Summary **West Yorkshire Mass Transit**

Spatial Development Framework Joint Development Plan Document

Regulation 18
January 2026



Non-Technical Summary - West Yorkshire Mass Transit Spatial Development Framework Joint Development Plan Document.

West Yorkshire Combined Authority is planning a new **Mass Transit network** – a modern, high-quality public transport system. Mass Transit is a vital part of the Weaver Network, which is a new approach to an integrated network of public transport and active travel in West Yorkshire.

This major investment will transform how people travel, connect communities, support new homes and jobs, tackle climate change, and create better places to live. By serving our existing places and business locations linking people to jobs, health, education, and leisure, Mass Transit could drive a cleaner, fairer, and better-connected West Yorkshire.

This consultation is about how the benefits of Mass Transit can be maximised by making sure that, aligned to mass transit, new homes, business premises, services and public spaces are built in the right locations, in the right way. To help achieve these aims, the five West Yorkshire Local Planning Authorities and the West Yorkshire Combined Authority are working together to create a shared planning policy document called a **joint Development Plan Document**. This is called a **Spatial Development Framework**.

Why does this matter?

West Yorkshire faces some big challenges:

- An economy growing its productivity, but lower than the UK average.
- A need to accelerate sustainable and inclusive economic and housing growth
- Congestion and unreliable journeys linked to too many trips reliant on the car within the region.
- Unequal access to jobs, opportunities, education and healthcare
- A need to continue to reduce harmful emissions and improve air quality
- Pressure on town centres and neighbourhoods because of the increase in online shopping and inequality

Mass Transit can help address these challenges — but **only if we plan purposefully and proactively around it**. Without a joined-up approach, we risk missing opportunities for regeneration, and investment alongside Mass Transit.

What is the joint Development Plan Document?

The joint Development Plan Document is a shared planning document covering **Bradford, Calderdale, Kirklees, Leeds and Wakefield**.

It will:

- Guide how development and regeneration happen near Mass Transit stops and hubs
- Help Local Planning Authorities work together across boundaries
- Support greener travel, healthier communities and inclusive growth

- Provide a framework for securing and bringing together public and private sector investment to make the most of the Mass Transit opportunity
- Inform decisions for the next **25 years**

It will not:

- Decide exact Mass Transit routes or stations
- Allocate specific housing or employment sites
- Change Green Belt boundaries
- Set new targets for housing or employment land development

Our Vision

Mass Transit is a **once-in-a-generation opportunity** to:

- Boost the economy by connecting employers to their workforce, supporting firms, innovators and entrepreneurs to collaborate, and strengthening economic hubs
- Connect people to jobs, education, health, leisure and services
- Integrate public transport by serving major railway stations and connecting to places people want to go.
- Support regeneration of towns, city centres and neighbourhoods
- Build high-quality, well-designed, walkable places at the right density
- Reduce carbon emissions and improve air quality
- Make sure everyone benefits, including the most disadvantaged communities
- Make it easier to travel without a car

What are we trying to achieve (our objectives)?

The joint Development Plan Document is guided by clear objectives, including:

- Better links between transport and development
- Growth that benefits all communities
- Safer, healthier, more walkable neighbourhoods
- Attractive and well-connected town and local centres
- A low-carbon, climate-resilient future
- Protection of green spaces, nature and heritage
- A framework for safeguarding land needed for future Mass Transit

How could this work?

The preferred approach of the Combined Authority and the five West Yorkshire Local Planning Authorities is to **focus new development around Mass Transit stops and hubs**. This will support new homes, jobs and services within reasonable walking distance of Mass Transit, and vibrant, mixed-use places with shops, workplaces, homes, public services and public spaces. The joint Development Plan Document will

create a framework for coordinated investment focused where this could bring the greatest benefit.

The alternative option is a business-as-usual approach leaving everything to individual Local Plans would risk uncoordinated development and missed opportunities, and weaker social, economic, and environmental outcomes.

Policy themes

The document identifies seven policy themes which we are seeking views on. They are set out below.

1. A place-based approach to transit-oriented development

New development should be designed **around** Mass Transit stops. This means:

- Walkable and bikeable neighbourhoods at the right density
- The right mix of homes, jobs, shops and services
- Buildings and public spaces that are well-designed and which respect and enhance local character and heritage
- Town and city centres are more attractive as places to live, work and visit

2. Creating a seamless, integrated transport network

Mass Transit should connect seamlessly with buses and trains; walking, wheeling and cycling; and park-and-ride and car rental or ride sharing services, where appropriate. Stations and stops, and their surrounding areas, should feel:

- Safe, welcoming and easy to use
- Well-lit, well-signed and accessible to everyone
- Integrated into streets and public spaces

3. Delivering inclusive growth

Too many people in West Yorkshire struggle to access opportunities, partly because of poor transport. Mass Transit has the potential to:

- Connect people to jobs and education
- Reduce the need to own or use a car
- Enable quicker journeys
- Improve access to healthcare, green spaces and leisure
- Support healthier, more active lifestyles

4. Climate change

Transport is a major source of carbon emissions in West Yorkshire. The plan aims to:

- Support a low-carbon future
- Encourage people to switch from cars to public transport
- Design infrastructure that copes with heat, flooding and extreme weather

5. Protecting and enhancing the environment

Mass Transit has the potential to improve the environment by:

- Creating new green spaces, trees and habitats, supporting biodiversity
- Improving air quality, reducing environmental emissions by helping reduce car use.
- Managing rainwater through natural drainage
- Making towns and cities greener and more resilient to climate change

6. Co-ordination of funding and investment on Mass Transit

To succeed in maximising the benefits of Mass Transit there is a need for:

- Joined-up public investment across different policy themes including transport, housing, regeneration, economic development, skills, and local infrastructure
- Clear signals to developers and investors about the places in which to invest
- A framework that can inform future regeneration plans for areas with the greatest potential that will be connected by Mass Transit

7. Safeguarding and delivery of Mass Transit infrastructure

To avoid problems later, land may need to be protected for future Mass Transit routes, depots, interchanges and park and ride sites.

This plan does **not** fix routes or designs now but sets out policies that will help prevent development that could block future options.

What are we asking you?

We want your views on:

- The overall vision and objectives
- Whether planning proactively around Mass Transit makes sense
- The proposed policy themes
- Whether anything important is missing
- How this approach could be strengthened and improved

How to provide feedback?

This first stage of the consultation - known as 'Regulation 18' - is to seek views on the scope and content of the draft joint Development Plan Document from the public, businesses, community groups, charitable organisations, statutory bodies and other stakeholders.

The Regulation 18 consultation will run from **Thursday 29 January until 23.59 on Thursday 12 March 2026.**

This consultation includes the 'Draft West Yorkshire Mass Transit Spatial Development Framework Joint Development Plan Document (DPD) Regulation 18 Main Report' and the following supporting documents.

- Habitat Regulation Assessment (HRA) Screening Report
- Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA)
- Sustainability Appraisal (SA) Compatibility Assessment
- Sustainability Appraisal (SA) Scoping Report (issued for statutory consultation in December 2025)

For further information we have also provided a Non-Technical Summary and Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs).

Once you have reviewed the consultation materials online, or at one of the locations across West Yorkshire listed [here](#) , please submit your response by completing the survey at:

<http://yourvoice.westyorks-ca.gov.uk/SDFReg18>

Consultation responses can also be submitted:

- By email - MassTransit@westyorks-ca.gov.uk
- By post - Freepost WEST YORKSHIRE COMBINED AUTHORITY (no stamp needed)

If you have any questions, need to respond in a different way, or require consultation materials in another format, please contact us using the details above, or by phoning us on 0113 245 7676 (Metroline - charged at the standard operator's rate).

Your feedback will help shape the second draft of this joint Development Plan Document which will include draft planning policies. This will be available for public consultation in 2026.

What happens next?

- This is the first consultation stage called Regulation 18
- Feedback will be used to draft detailed policies
- A second consultation (known as Regulation 19) on an updated version of the joint Development Plan Document, which includes proposed policies, will take place in 2026
- A report summarising the responses received to the second consultation will be submitted alongside the joint Development Plan Document to the Planning Inspectorate by the end of 2026
- The submitted joint Development Plan Document will be independently examined by the Planning Inspectorate before adoption by each of the five West Yorkshire Local Planning Authorities. This is likely to take place in late 2027 or early 2028.